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**BRIEFING FOR THE PRESIDENT ON PUBLIC OPINION TRENDS IN VARIOUS
FOREIGN COUNTRIES**

Source Materials on Public Opinion

1. Official Opinion*

- a. Embassy Reports
- b. In some cases editorial opinion -- either in the press or on the radio.
- c. American journalism
- d. CIA -- usually delayed, not in any quantity and not predictable in terms of regularity but occasional reports are very good.

2. Politically Articulate Groups*

- a. The press and periodicals
- b. Embassy reports
- c. American journalism
- d. Public opinion polls
- e. Debriefing American travelers abroad
- f. CIA

* In each case the area analyst in Washington can, apart from the analysis of the sources mentioned above, make an educated guess as to existing or probable reactions based on intimate knowledge of the area and previous reactions on various issues.

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3. The Masses*

- a. Public opinion polls
- b. Mission reporting -- among other things, through the use of contacts with organizations such as trade union officials.
- c. The Press

Commentary on Sources by Area

50X1

2. Near East -- Press reactions in this area are usually delayed. Public opinion and the press tend to concentrate on local matters. Cairo press and radio are important for the area and usually report the Arab point of view. There is little other substantive material. India is, of course, different with a press characterized by more of the world outlook.

3. The Far East -- Communist public opinion and the reactions of the public must be reached in the main by an analysis of the communist propaganda output which, of course, reflects official opinion in the main. Thus there is little access to public opinion other than through propaganda analysis. In Southeast Asia the press tends to reflect the stereotyped editorial position of the papers. It will not likely be a good measure of either official opinion or the articulate public except in Thailand.

50X1

50X1

4. Latin America -- The sources are limited. Some polling exists. In general the reactions on given issues are very readily predictable from Washington.

METHODS OF IMPROVING THE INTAKE OF SOURCE MATERIAL

1. Expand the polling technique. It is understood that the limitation here is less funds on the part of USIA (which is the only US Agency active in contracting for foreign polling) than the personnel to properly prepare the instructions for a poll. It is also understood that such polls as have been conducted

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have been planned in cooperation and in consultation with the agencies in the national security area of the Government.

2. More extensive guidance to missions. The Department of State has, on occasion, received useful response when explicit requests are made on a given question or questions.

3. More pointed briefing for selected American travelers who will be in contact with important parts of the public in a given country.

4. Intensify efforts to get more publications more rapidly from the field to Washington.

METHODS FOR PROVIDING SERVICE TO MR. ROCKEFELLER

1. If the interest is primarily in the data derived from polls the USIA's "Barometer" (copy attached) should be made available with such additional briefing by USIA, which contracts for the polls.

2. If a more comprehensive report is desired, the following procedures might be established:

a. Mr. Rockefeller should select the areas of the world or specific countries on which public opinion trends are desired in regard to

(1) continuing issues* and

(2) spot issues.

b. Such guidance should be made available to

(1) USIA/IRI in order that it may prepare for and let contracts for polls in keeping with the guidance, the questions to be used having been coordinated among the agencies in order to reflect their needs and

- * e.g.,
- (1) Atomic Energy
 - (2) Formosa Straits
 - (3) European Rearmament and Unity
 - (4) Neutralism
 - (5) East-West Relationships

suggestions. (It is understood that this has been the current practice. There may be a more systematic way to secure such guidance from the agencies than in the past.)

(2) State Department/OIR which would:

- (a) Provide additional instruction as required to embassies**
- (b) Proceed to gather material from all sources including raw data from USIA/IRI polls and**
- (c) Prepare analytical briefs including probable reactions on the basis of knowledge of the area and previous reactions observed.**

c. The final product could be submitted to Mr. Rockefeller

(1) Orally by experts from USIA/IRI and State Department/OIR

(2) Written in short crisp style (an illustration of some written material already produced by the State Department is attached), with more elaborate explanatory memoranda if desired and the use of graphic materials where appropriate (this may apply mostly to data obtained from the USIA polls)

(3) A combination of 1 and 2 above.